Disinvestment of SCI

1923. SHRI RAJKUMAR DHOOT: Will the Minister of DISINVESTMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the national flag carrier Shipping Corporation of India is to be privatised;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether it is also a fact that many foreign firms, who had shown some interest in SCI, have pulled out;

(d) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(e) whether Government have considered all pros and cons of country's security, infiltration, smuggling, etc. at the time of embroiled political situation?

THE MINISTER OF DISINVESTMENT (SHRI ARUN SHOURIE): (a) and (b) The Government have decided to disinvest its 51% holding in Shipping Corporation of India Ltd. (SCI). The disinvestment in a public sector undertaking is done as per the declared policy of bringing down Government shareholding in non-strategic public sector undertakings to 26% or lower.

(c) and (d) For Government to realize the best price, the less a bidder knows the better, about who and how many rivals he is bidding against. As a matter of policy, therefore, Government does not confirm or deny either the number or identity of potential bidders.

(e) As a matter of policy, Government always, protects the interests of the country—in particular in regard to security.

Disinvestment proposal of ITDC Hotel Kanishka

1924 SHRI K. B. KRISHNA MURTHY: Will the Minister of DISINVESTMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have shelved the disinvestment proposal of ITDC-owned Kanishka Hotel due to difficulties in unbundling the utilities and real estate aspects it shares with the adjoining Ashok Yatri Niwas hotel;

(b) if so, by when the issues are likely to be sorted out;

(c) whether Hotel Ashok, New Delhi and Hotel Janpath have been taken out of disinvestment basket; and

(d) if so, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF DISINVESTMENT (SHRI ARUN SHOURIE): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise in view of reply to (a) above.

(c) and (d) Hotel Ashok and Hotel Janpath, New Delhi have at present been excluded from the disinvestment process pending formulation of fresh proposals by the Ministry of Tourism and Culture. As regards Hotel Janpath, the Ministry of Tourism and Culture proposes to utilise the hotel to establish Bharat Paryatan Bhavan.

Employees' participation in bidding for companies

1925. SHRI K. B. KRISHNA MURTHY: Will the Minister of DISINVESTMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether honouring the special rights of workers over the stakes of their companies. Government propose to offer incentives to employees' associations bidding for the stakes of their own company;

(b) whether this concept will be put into practice in any of the forthcoming investment bids; and

(c) whether Government had earlier rejected the bid of Pilots Guild for Air India stakes but now considering favourably the bid of employees of Engineers India Ltd. which is to be taken up for disinvestment soon?

THE MINISTER OF DISINVESTMENT (SHRI ARUN SHOURIE): (a) No, Sir. But workers are welcome to bid provided they fulfil the qualification criteria.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) The Expression of Interest of the Pilots' Guild of Air India for acquiring the shares of Air India was rejected as the Guild did not fulfil the prescribed minimum net worth criteria. The Engineers India Ltd. Officers Association, which had submitted the Expression of Interest for acquiring